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Draft report

Addendum

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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (item 4 (b))

Section 1. Overall policy-making, direction and coordination

1. At its 26th meeting, on 22 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 1)). The Controller introduced the section.

Discussion

2. The importance of strengthening the Office of the President of the General Assembly was reiterated. It was noted that the resources for the Office of the President were now presented by objects of expenditure pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997. It was noted that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/214 of 18 December 1998, the President of the Assembly should have full authority to use the funds provided in the budget for the Office, including hospitality, travel and any other requirements for the accomplishment of the President's official responsibility. It was observed that expenses for hospitality would facilitate the functions of the President. Satisfaction was expressed with the transfer of the narrative concerning the Office of the President from section 2, General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, to section 1 and their incorporation into the programme of work of the General Assembly.

3. Support was also given to the establishment of the Office of the Director-General in Nairobi and to bringing the financial arrangements of the United Nations Office at Nairobi into line with those of similar United Nations administrative offices, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/220. Regarding the new Office of the Director-General at Nairobi, it was felt that the functions of that Office should be at par with those of the Offices of the Directors-General at Geneva and Vienna.

4. Concern was expressed that a number of narratives in the section appeared to show duplication and overlapping, for example, regarding the functions of the Department of Public Information and those of the Office of External Relations and as regards activities related to the process of reform. It was pointed out that the narrative on mandates

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appeared to be vague. It was observed that certain activities deserved further justification in relation to mandates by legislative bodies, in particular the activities of Office of the Director-General in Geneva, related to the establishment of a network of a repository of expertise in support of good governance and sustainable economic and social development. It was noted that the narrative of the Office of the Director-General in Geneva reflected a change in approach. It was emphasized, therefore, that, in the formulation of activities for that Office, particular attention should be paid to the mandates entrusted to the Director-General. A proposal was made to delete the last sentence in paragraph 1.66, which read "To that end, the Office is exploring the establishment of such a network, which would gradually include relevant institutions elsewhere in Europe and lead to the creation of a repository of expertise in support of good governance and sustainable economic and social development".

5. In connection with the activities of the Secretary-General, the view was expressed that specific importance was attributed to his key role in efforts to secure the observance of human rights. The view was also expressed that the key role played by the Secretary-General related to a number of activities and that those activities should be accorded equal importance.

6. The view was expressed that expected accomplishments for the biennium needed to be further developed. The view was also expressed that programme managers needed to fully implement the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation regarding self-evaluation and the identification of activities that were inefficient, ineffective and irrelevant.

Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, subject to the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 1.50, insert, after the second sentence reading "Included ... December 1997", a new sentence reading "The functions and responsibilities of the Deputy Secretary-General are in accordance with paragraph 1 of resolution 52/12 B";

(a) (bis) In the penultimate sentence of paragraph 1.50, replace the phrase "This organizational unit" with "The Executive Office of the Secretary-General", and move that sentence after the first sentence of the paragraph and before the sentence reading "Included in this ... 19 December 1997.";

(a) (ter) In the first sentence of paragraph 1.65, after the words "Economic and Social Council" and before "protocol and liaison functions", the words "responsibilities entrusted to the Director-General of the Conference on Disarmament" should be added;

(b) In the last sentence of paragraph 1.75, insert the word "core" before the words "functions can be stated as follows", and in subparagraph 1.75 (b), after the words "non-governmental organizations", insert the words "in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council".